

April 5, 2009

Dear Friends of the Foundation:

As we continue to read together through Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, we have arrived this week at the second half of chapter 8 of Book II. As we have already seen, this chapter has to do with his explanation of the moral law, the ten commandments.

And as we have already seen, he treats the law expansively, so that the clear and forceful prohibition of major outward acts of evil also includes by extension any lesser acts of evil and even the inner intent of evil. Moreover, every negative commandment also has positive implications about doing good in ways large and small as well as inwardly seeking and willing good.

For instance, the commandment against stealing implies positively that we are obligated to care for other's goods and therefore for the good of others. And as an example of faithfully paying our debts to others, Calvin offers in section 46 this exposition of the duties of ministers:

Let the ministers of churches faithfully attend to the ministry of the Word, not adulterating the teaching of salvation, but delivering it pure and undefiled to God's people. And let them instruct the people not only through teaching, but also through example of life. In short, let them exercise authority as good shepherds over their sheep. Let the people in their turn receive them as messengers and apostles of God, render to them that honor of which the highest Master has deemed them worthy, and give them those things necessary for their livelihood. (p. 410)

'To adulterate the teaching of salvation,' to mix it with anything else, to compromise it in any way, to water it down, to sell it short, to omit it, to forget it, to neglect it, to deny it, to betray it—each of these would be a violation of the eighth commandment. It is, instead, our duty 'to deliver' the gospel of Jesus Christ 'pure and undefiled to God's people.' It is our duty to teach through word and deed. It is our duty to shepherd the sheep.

The Foundation for Reformed Theology seeks to help our ministers be the best ministers they can, and through them we seek to help all the churches be the best churches they can.

Grace and Peace,

Jim

Dr. James C. Goodloe IV, *Executive Director*

The Foundation for Reformed Theology

4103 Monument Avenue

Richmond, Virginia 23230

www.foundationrt.org

(804) 678-8352

"Promoting the study of Reformed theology for the renewal of the church"

The Foundation is exempt from Federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) and is not a private foundation as defined by Section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.